

Strathworks – Finish Standards & Tolerances

What to expect from outdoor work and natural materials

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Trading name: Strathworks (sole trader)

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Applies to: Domestic works carried out by Strathworks

Part of the agreement: This document forms part of the agreement when referenced in the Quote and/or Terms & Conditions.

1. Why this document exists

Outdoor construction and landscaping use natural materials, are built on existing ground, and are affected by weather. Because of this, a “factory-perfect” finish is not always possible or expected.

This document explains:

- what a good finish looks like in practice, and
- what minor variations are normal and acceptable.

We aim for a neat, consistent finish and will put right anything clearly outside normal trade standards, or anything that creates a safety issue.

2. General standards that apply to all work

Workmanship

- Work will be carried out with reasonable care and skill and to normal trade standards.
- We will follow the agreed Quote & Scope of Works and any agreed Variations.

Natural variation

- **Colour, texture, and pattern variation** is normal with natural materials (stone, aggregates, timber, turf, plants).
- Even manufactured products can vary slightly between batches.

Weather and ground conditions

- Some outcomes (especially drainage, settlement, and planting) are influenced by weather and site conditions.
- Unforeseen ground conditions can only be identified once excavation starts. Where this happens, we will discuss options before proceeding.

Existing surfaces and tie-ins

- When joining to existing paving, tarmac, paths, walls, or thresholds, we aim for the best possible match.
- Small differences can be unavoidable due to existing levels, structure, and material differences.

3. Paving and slabs (sandstone, porcelain, concrete, granite, etc.)

Levels, alignment, and edges

- Minor variation in alignment and edge lines can occur over long runs, especially where the property itself is not perfectly square/straight.
- Minor differences between slab edges can occur due to manufacturing tolerances and natural stone variation.

Joint widths

- Joint widths may vary slightly to achieve a consistent overall layout, to account for slab size variation, and to suit cuts around features (drains, steps, walls).
- Joint lines will be kept as consistent as reasonably practical for the chosen product.

Lippage (small height differences between adjacent slabs)

- Small differences in level between adjacent slabs can occur, particularly with **riven/tumbled/hand-finished** products.
- We aim to minimise lippage and will address any areas that are clearly outside normal trade standards or create a trip hazard.

Cuts and finishing details

- Cut edges may be visible in some areas (especially around curves, drains, borders, and fixed features). We will place cuts in the least noticeable locations where practical.
- Small edge chips can occur during handling/installation. We will avoid using noticeably damaged units and will replace units where damage is significant or visually unacceptable in prominent areas.

Natural colour variation

- Natural stone varies in shade and markings. This is normal and not a defect.
- Where possible, we will mix from multiple packs to blend natural variation.

4. Block paving

Lines and levels

- Block paving is installed to falls/levels as designed. Minor variation in line straightness and joint spacing is normal.
- Minor settlement can occur as blocks bed in, particularly in the first weeks/months depending on weather and use.

Jointing sand

- Kiln-dried sand can settle and may need topping up after initial use and weathering. This is normal maintenance.
- Weed growth can occur over time due to wind-blown seeds; it is not automatically a sign of poor installation.

5. Falls, water run-off, and drainage expectations

Falls and run-off

- We install surfaces to the falls specified in the Quote/Scope (or as agreed on site where appropriate).
- Outdoor surfaces may show **temporary surface water** during heavy rain. A small amount of standing water immediately after rainfall can occur, especially before the surface is fully cleaned/settled.

Drainage performance depends on more than the surface

Drainage outcomes can be affected by:

- blocked gullies/outfalls, existing drains, or soakaways,
- council/street drainage conditions,
- neighbouring works altering water flow,
- exceptional rainfall, and
- lack of maintenance (eg not clearing channels/gullies).

If persistent pooling occurs and is clearly due to workmanship (not external factors), it should be reported as a snag/warranty issue.

6. Turf, planting, and soft landscaping

Turf

- Turf is a living product. Colour variation, slight gaps at joins, and initial unevenness can occur while it beds in.
- Some areas may look thinner initially; turf typically improves with correct watering and care.
- Turf performance depends heavily on aftercare (watering, mowing height, feeding, and avoiding heavy use until established).

Plants

- Plants are living materials; growth, flowering, and establishment vary with weather, soil, and care.
- Plant failure can occur due to lack of watering, pests, disease, extreme weather, or poor conditions beyond our control.

Borders, mulch, and natural movement

- Mulch and topsoil can settle after rainfall.
- Soil levels may need minor topping-up after bedding in.

(We can provide an aftercare sheet for the specific planting/turf used on your job.)

7. Fencing, timber work, and gates (if included)

- Timber is a natural material and can expand/contract, twist slightly, or develop small splits as it dries and seasons.
- Minor movement is normal, especially after wet/dry cycles and wind.
- Gates may require occasional adjustment over time due to ground movement and timber movement.

8. “What counts as a snag?”

Snagging items are minor issues identified after completion that can reasonably be put right, for example:

- a loose unit, a small area needing re-sanding, a minor finishing detail, or a small adjustment.

Snagging does **not** include:

- normal settling and bedding-in that occurs over time (unless excessive or clearly due to workmanship),
- maintenance items (eg topping up jointing sand),

- changes caused by third parties, weather extremes, or misuse.

9. When to raise issues

- Please inspect the work at handover and report any concerns as soon as possible.
- Snagging should be reported within **7 days** of Practical Completion (as per the Terms & Conditions).
- For warranty issues, contact us in writing with photos where possible.

Contact: support@strathworks.co.uk · 07440 475716

10. Safety comes first

If you believe something is unsafe (trip hazard, unstable edging, etc.), contact us immediately. Safety-related issues will be prioritised.